

Strategy Research Project

WAR: WILL, ACTION AND RESOURCES

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

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ABSTRACT

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While substantial effort has been and continues to be expended in developing the theories governing the conduct of war, not as much comparative effort has been given to addressing the means by which various levels of conflict can be anticipated and averted. What is required is a unifying theory of war AND that of 'conflicted peace' that addresses the conditions and preventive activities associated with the transition from each. This paper better defines and expands the traditional theory of war. In so doing it proposes a larger application of "conflict" to describe a spectrum ranging from *competition* through *conventional war*. It then postulates a definition of conflict that addresses the sub-elements of will, resources, capabilities and action to describe the conditions under which conflict occurs and is adjudicated. Finally it uses six case studies to illustrate the application of the theory and concludes with a description of how the theory can assist in identifying incidents occurring in seams within the spectrum of conflict, impel analysis, and spur mitigation and deterrent measures to prevent the incidents' reoccurrences or escalation.

WAR: WILL, ACTION, AND RESOURCES

War is endemic to humankind and as such it has served as a central topic of study and analysis since recorded time. Throughout history, war has taken many forms as opposing sides struggle to prevail in conflict spanning social, economic, military and political domains and search for ways to overcome comparative disadvantages and exploit relative superiority in each of these domains. Although it is unlikely that war can ever be completely eradicated, there are numerous instances where war was avoided or deterred. While substantial effort has been and continues to be expended in developing the theories governing the conduct of war, not as much comparative effort has been given to addressing the means by which various levels of conflict can be anticipated and averted. What is required is a unifying theory of war AND that of 'conflicted peace' that addresses the conditions and preventive activities associated with the transition from each. By a thorough analysis of these transition seams we can better understand when we are approaching a state of war with the aim of limiting escalation prior to its inception. This paper will illustrate the interaction of the basic components of conflict as a tool for a strategist to anticipate, prepare for, or prevent war.

The nature of war is changing and traditionally accepted definitions of war, such as Clausewitz' "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will,"¹ do not adequately address the nuances associated with the full spectrum of modern conflict. Within the domains of social, political, and economics conflict occurs and is considered within the context of traditional theories of war. Numerous studies and books adeptly apply the theories of Sun-tzu and Clausewitz to these extra-martial domains. Notwithstanding that some of these applications stretch the limits of applicability; they

also better inform the context under which conflict in these domains can be pursued towards a more improved end. These analogical references do not detract from the nature or theories of war but rather can better inform them. It is the purpose of this paper to more appropriately define and expand that traditional theory of war. In so doing it proposes a larger application of “conflict” to describe a spectrum ranging from competition through conventional war. It then postulates a definition of conflict addressing the sub-elements of will, resources, capabilities and action to describe the conditions under which conflict is pursued and adjudicated. Finally it uses six case studies to illustrate the application of the theory and concludes with a description of how the theory can assist in identifying incidents occurring in seams within the spectrum of conflict, impel analysis and spur mitigation and deterrent measures to prevent reoccurrences or escalation.

During the last half of the 20th century organizations, businesses, crime syndicates, associations, political movements, and unions have so grown in size and influence that their popular support and acquired wealth rival many nation states.² These factors make it necessary to consider them as transnational and intra-national actors with the ability to initiate competition that can devolve into coercive competition and eventually transition into war. These actors can exercise influence and impose their ‘will’ on other actors and even nation states using ways and means that have not been previously addressed in the body of knowledge on conflict and war.

To both these ends, this paper offers expanded definitions of competition, coercive competition and war that subsumes the contemporary spectrum of conflict. Within this theoretical construct *competition* is defined as the socially acceptable and

beneficial interaction between factions pursuing competing interests within legally constrained limits. The key product or ‘effect’ of competition is improved conditions for non-stakeholders or society in general. While there are many short-term negative impacts of un-healthy competition, over the long-term regulated competition within a level playing field that inhibits monopolistic domination raises the quality of life of the entire society. Differently, *coercive competition* occurs when competition exceeds a socially acceptable threshold and devolves into one or both parties violating legal, moral, or ethical limits of conduct. A distinction is thus made between constructive competition within the current social framework and unproductive competition with the use of the adjective *coercive* to imply proscribed insidious types of competitive activity. *War* is dissimilar from both *competition* and *coercive competition* in that it resorts to violence as a means to achieve an ends. Interestingly, both coercive competition and war can be morally justified depending upon the perspective of the opponents. Should one side or the other perceive that societal or international conditions are unfair or discriminatory to their prospects for progress or success, they can justify their resort to illegal conduct and/or violence with the intent of reforming or changing those conditions. Thus legitimacy and the ability to appeal to the ‘will’ of potential stakeholders can both fuel, or if intervention measures are taken, diffuse *coercive competition* and *war*. Likewise, *war* can be justified and conducted within moral and ethical constraints based upon a full range of conditions and factors imbedded in the widely recognized *jus ad bellum* (right to wage war) and *jus in bello* (moral conduct in waging war). While certain universal ethical principles exist, acceptability, justification, and fairness is largely dependent on the perspective of the stakeholders...those that actually lead and engage

in the conflict and those that directly or indirectly support the disputing factions. However, this tri-partitioning of the spectrum of conflict (*competition, coercive competition, and war*) provides a useful lens by which the operational and strategic environments can be monitored, assessed and, if required, intervention measures taken to preclude the escalation and assuage *coercive competition* and *war*. Within this theoretical framework, *conflict consists of the dialectic of opposing entities using marshaled resources employed as capabilities fueled by the will of their respective leaders and followers in order to achieve competing ends.*

To evaluate this construct, this paper will first provide some supporting definitions, then develop a theoretical framework and finally provide several short case studies to further amplify the construct.

Context and Definition

For professionals, definitions are important as they provide the common basis for understanding and context. For military professionals, the widely accepted definition of war is from Carl Von Clausewitz' On War where he wrote, "*War is thus an act of force to compel our opponent to do our will.*"³ This paper will return to this definition frequently as it introduces three components of war: Will, Actions, and Resources.

Will – Aristotle, in his classic work Politic wrote, "But since the city, like any other whole made up of many parts, is something composite, clearly the first thing to seek out is the citizen, for the city is a multitude of citizens."⁴ Aristotle recognized what many miss, that an organization is made of individual people. Understanding the organization means understanding the people and likewise the organizational behavior depends on the individual and collective 'wills' of its people. Military theorists have used the concept of 'will' to help define and explain war. As previously noted, Clausewitz included it in his

definition, "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will."⁵ Sun-tzu states in his opening chapter, "The Tao causes the people to be fully in accord with the ruler."⁶ Both of these definitions address 'will' but not with the precision necessary to fully grasp its central role in the strategy formulation for effective intervention measures. Clausewitz speaks to 'will' as an end-state or a defining goal to be achieved while Sun-Tzu's statement implies the concept of 'will' as the link between the leader and the led. Ralph Sawyer explains in the endnotes of his translation: "Tao used in this context is not philosophical but a legal tie."⁷ Both of these fall short because they fail to address that 'will' extends, in various degrees, to all affected by conflict and, although certain organizations and forms of government may attempt to dictate the 'will' of those they control or govern, those affected by conflict are free to formulate their own perceptions. This freedom of cognitive judgment translates into the 'will' that determines the strength or opposition of the support for the cause or faction.

Simply put, 'will' represents both the 'will' of the leadership and the 'will' of the people; when both of these are in alignment an organization or state has the singularity of purpose to act to the extent that resources allow.

Appointed, elected or emergent leaders exist in all organizations and states: presidents, monarchs, and dictators exist as the recognized leader or heads of state. Chief executive officers, clergy, chairs of the boards, presidents, mafiosos, and superintendents exist in other domains. All of these are the recognized leaders of organizations and states – however, in some cases those occupying these positions are not inclusive of the assigned leadership present within the populace or parent organizations. Many times, influence and leadership is exercised by individuals in

relatively minor positions of authority who, because of their referent power, communicative skills and/or innate intelligence, hold sway over many others. In some cases these referent leaders provide a better barometer of the 'will' of the organization/populace and can help determine effective intervention strategies to preclude or mitigate *coercive competition* or war.

The group members or "people" constitute the led. They are the citizens, employees, students, followers, members, and stakeholders which make-up an organization or state. Ultimately, their support provides the source of power associated with both recognized and referent leaders. As previously indicated, people possess their own 'will' which must be marshaled by their leaders to support and execute the leader's intentions. In some cases, 'will' can be suppressed by fear, oppression, or misled by misinformation or propaganda. Whether inwardly or outwardly expressed, free 'will' is always present and subject to influence.

The exercise of 'will' can result in moral or immoral activity. For instance, after the failure of the Enron Corporation in 2001, Warren Buffet stated, "Though Enron has become the symbol for shareholder abuse, there is no shortage of egregious conduct elsewhere in corporate America."⁸ How apparent were the immoral actions of Enron when the company came apart at the seams and how seeming prophetic are the words of the 'Oracle of Omaha'⁹ in 2001 given the financial crisis of 2008? Even with forewarning, America languished as the government gave tacit approval to 'coercive competitive' practices by these powerful entities, and perhaps through purposeful neglect, was egregiously complicit with continued immoral actions by these companies.¹⁰ As a result of these actions, the nation found itself at great economic risk.

Resources – Important to any strategy is the correct alignment of ends, ways and means. Feasible concepts (ways) bridge the desirable ends with available means. Paramount to any strategy is the determination of what resources are required to attain the ends and what resources can be expected to be produced over the expected duration of the conflict. Clausewitz clarifies this point in a short discourse on the “Maximum Exertion of Strength”¹¹ where he addresses the calculation of the means: “The extent of the means at his disposal is a matter – though not exclusively – of figures, and should be measurable.”¹² In today’s complex strategic environment opponents may not be nation states which makes the comparative calculations of resources, expected conflict duration, and associated marshalling and sustainment of each side’s ‘will’ very difficult.

Resources are finite and therefore have a limiting impact on actions. Examples of resources include: personnel, wealth, and materiel, which are combined into a ‘capability’ to be used in a manner (ways) to achieve a desirable ends. In this regards wealth is simply the available funding or credit used to purchase materiel, pay personnel, or fund operations. Materiel are all items, supplies, spares, parts and support equipment necessary to equip, operate, maintain, and support competitive activities without distinction as to its application for administrative or competitive purposes.¹³ Capability is a grouping of, personnel and/or materiel employed in a manner that supports a specified course of action.¹⁴ Capabilities can be generated with a broad range of resources and employment methods. Through innovative application as portions of various capabilities, resources are marshaled for conflict and act as a fungible asset.

Coercive Actions - Organizations or states pursue strategies and conduct activities to sustain or further their interests. These actions occur along a continuum from constructive to counter-productive to violent. It is at a defined point along the continuum where these actions become coercive in nature and that activities should trigger attention and, if appropriate, a strategic response. Effective strategies employ all the elements of power: diplomacy/political, information, military, and economic, (DIME). Although broad in scope, these elements are not inclusive nor are they universally applicable to strategies across the modern spectrum of conflict. By definition, war depends on coercion by employing violence to prevail.

However, coercive measures can also serve to limit the escalation of conflict and deter war. For instance, prior to entering war, Archidamus, the Lacedaemonian king gave these instructions “I do bid you not to take up arms at once, but to send and remonstrate with them in a tone not too suggestive of war, nor again too suggestive of submission.”¹⁵ This statement reflects a nuanced application of the use of coercion through a demonstration of force that communicated the feelings of the Lacedaemonians, and that intimates the possibility of war as a consequence of further provocative actions conducted by the Athenians. Clausewitz alludes to this pre-conflict coercive interaction when he states: “War never breaks out wholly unexpectedly, nor can it spread instantaneously. Each side can therefore gauge the other to a large extent by what he is and does, instead of judging him by what he, strictly speaking, ought to be or do.”¹⁶

The Ends: Pursuit of Favorable Consequences – All strategies guiding competition, coercive competition and war pursue ‘ends’ effecting a change from what is

or what would be. In Confucius' Analects he wrote, "If the Way were realized in the world, then I would not need to change anything.^{17"} Likewise, if not for the perceived need for change, conflict would never occur. Within the spectrum of conflict it is the dialectic between two entities adjudicated through competition, coercive competition and war that bring about change. What drive the dialectic are both opportunities and threats and the perceived need for a change in the status quo or the avoidance of a portended change.

Thus conflict exists between one or more organizations or states when one of the parties willingly engages in competitive or coercive actions with or against another party. If both parties recognize the dialectic then each party will use those actions that are acceptable and supportable based on the 'will' of the leaders and their respective followers and to the extent that resources will allow.

Theoretical Framework

With the foundation of the definitions provided this paper will develop a theoretical framework and use a visual depiction of the expanded definition of conflict.

Will - Ideally each of the components would be measurable by a uniform standard. However, as the name implies, 'will' is an amorphous characteristic of personal or collective resolve or of moral support. Accurately estimating its comparative strength and resiliency is difficult. To accurately forecast the relative strength over the duration of a conflict is next to impossible. Nevertheless, strategic success depends first and foremost upon a reasonable comparative assessment of the 'will' of the opposing leaders and supporting followers. Depending upon this calculus, strategies are developed to rapidly employ capabilities and achieve victory within existing constraints or designed to marshal and sustain the will throughout a protracted conflict.

Generally, a moderate amount of will is required to employ a moderate amount of capability, over a short amount of time, to achieve clearly defined and positive results. The greater the cost/required resources, the longer the conflict, the more ill-defined the end-state and the smaller the expected rewards, the more that 'will' must be marshaled and sustained to support the strategy. By definition, when the will of the leaders and followers approaches zero, the conflict is abandoned. There is no moral support for continuation. In war, it would result in unconditional surrender or precipitous withdrawal. Similarly, strategists would estimate the various opponents 'will' and take the comparison into consideration when designing the overall strategy by balancing ends, ways and means. As the definition of conflict explains, 'will' fuels the employment of resources.

Resources – Resources lend themselves to measurement more readily than 'will'; the challenge that exists in measuring resources is establishing comparative standards of measurement such as: number and quality of personnel, available funding, level of technology, supporting facilities, geopolitical advantages, superior military doctrine, tactics, training and organizations, etc. Again, each factor would be measured both individually and collectively as a measure of overall organizational effectiveness or national strength. (See Figure 1)¹⁸ As with the analysis of 'will' the conflict requires a relative comparison with the opponents and, like calculations of 'will,' it is the comparison of diverse and disparate capabilities that makes conflict so difficult to predict. This is because the ways in which resources are employed affects the intrinsic value of the resources, and in conflict and competition, the opposing sides' employment concepts are dynamic and difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, effective strategists

attempt to valuate comparative capabilities using estimates of how they will be employed.

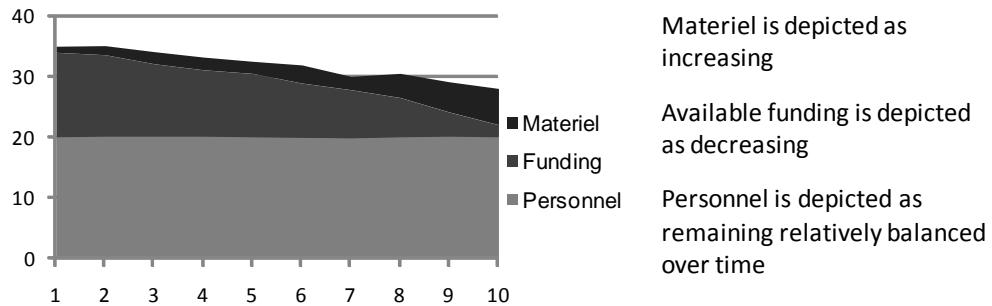


Figure 1: Resources

Conflict – The definition of conflict specifies that employed resources are fueled by the ‘will’ of each sides’ respective leaders and followers towards achieving competing ends. Thus, if ‘will’ OR resources go to zero the overall strategic effort goes to zero. Conflict cannot be pursued without both the will of the leaders/people and some level of resource capability. Thus the overall capability of an entity can be conceptually expressed as the multiplicative product of resources times ‘will.’

Another variable that has been alluded to throughout the above discussion is that of time. This is important for it accounts for the fact that comparative ‘will’ and resources change according to the outcomes of ongoing competition, engagements, battles, and campaigns across all the domains of conflict. As previously indicated, the comparative strategies are adjudicated by the consequences of conflict over time. As one side’s qualitatively superior strategy prevails over another, the losing side usually experiences higher levels of attrition, loss of resources and the degradation of the supporting will. Correspondingly, the winning side experiences a relative increase in overall capability as they suffer less materiel losses and morale and esprit improves with tactical and

operational successes. This framework extends to business competitive areas based upon comparative increases in market share and profits. Similar measures can be developed and applied to other competitive domains. Figure 2 represents a comparison between two competitors where the first, (solid line), begins conflict with the greater 'will' and Resources than its opponent, (dashed line). Over time the superior quality of the opposing strategy of the inferior opponent prevails over that of the superior participant as the first expends Resources and losses its 'will' while its opponent gains Resources and/or gains 'will'. An argument could be made that this might reflect the U.S. and North Vietnam over the course of the Viet Nam War.

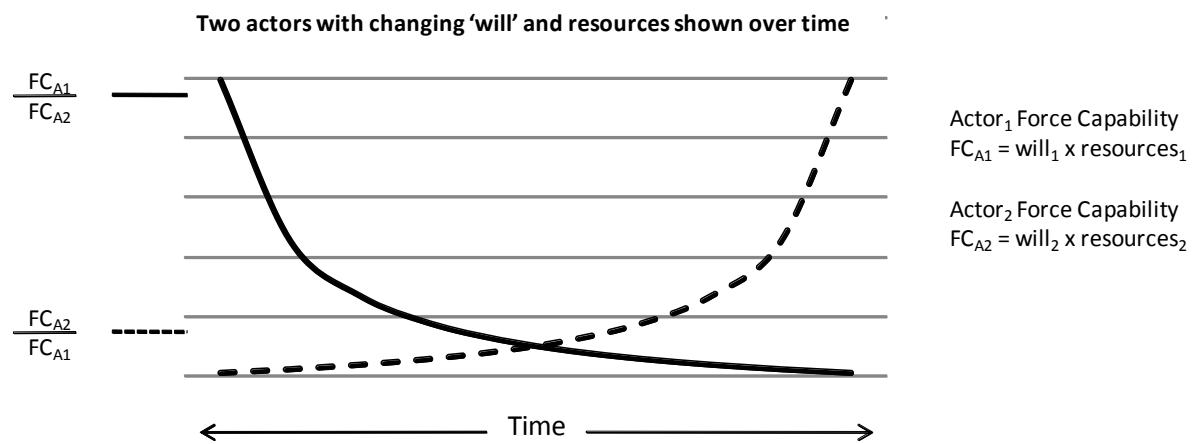


Figure 2:

Thus conflict and competition cannot be pursued in a vacuum. To have conflict, there must be opposition. Resources and 'will' are only relevant when juxtaposed against an opposing entity. Since conflict is the dialectic of opposing entities all measures of 'will' and resources are relative. You do not have to be the best, all you need to be is better than your competitors. Quality matters, but quantity also has a quality all its own. Moreover, what adjudicates conflict is also the comparative quality of the strategies adopted by each side. Not only does the outcome depend upon

reasonable assessments of comparative measures of ‘will’ and resources and the formulation of feasible and acceptable strategies taking into account those assets, it also depends on how rapidly each side can adapt their strategies to miscalculations of all three of these areas during the conflict. The variables are endless. Conflict is conducted within a complex adaptive system. Consequently, any theoretical construct must begin with the caveat that whatever is determined as a basis for the strategy is likely to be wrong. The goal is not to be precise but rather strive to not be too wrong and then make rapid adjustments as appropriate.

Case Studies

To illustrate the applicability of the theoretical construct, the paper will apply the framework to various case studies. Two examples in the following three categories depict this theoretical framework: Nation State versus Nation State, Non-State Actor versus Non-State Actor, and finally Non-State Actor versus Nation State.

Nation State versus Nation State. World War I – In August 1914 war broke out in Europe which would become known as the First World War. In Barbara Tuchman’s book, The Guns of August, she notes: “Ever since 1892, when France and Russia had joined in military alliance, it was clear that four of the five signatories of the Belgian treaty would be automatically engaged – two against two – in a war for which Schlieffen had to plan.”¹⁹ This plan became known as the Schlieffen plan named for its principal author, Count Alfred von Schlieffen, the Chief of Staff of the German General Staff. The French had also developed a plan; Plan 17, which was designed with a strong offense in mind and was adopted in May 1913.²⁰ The plans were so fully developed and inculcated within the force that even when the German Kaiser, at the initiation of

hostilities, attempted to stop the mobilization and deployment of German forces he could not successfully do so.

Will - For nearly twenty years the 'will' of the primary participants had been increasingly propped up by nationalism, rhetoric, and the faith in their professional military forces. Both sides stood ready to annihilate the opposition. Resources – Both sides fully marshaled its resources; both in terms of materiel, such as supplies and equipment, and in terms of non-materiel, such as plans and doctrine. Actions – The actions taken over time were fully the manifestation of the product of 'will' x Resources.

The final toll was over 8,600,000 killed,²¹ a financial cost of \$337 Billion,²² and a peace that fully represented Clausewitz' premise, "In War the Result is Never Final."²³ This is an example of war where both sides of the conflict approached parity in 'will' and resources and with few exceptions, both eventually pursued traditional strategies of attrition. However, with the entry of the US into the conflict in 1917 the balance of power shifted towards the western allies and caused a corresponding dip in the morale of Germany that eventually resulted in Germany's capitulation. This example is depicted by Figure 3.

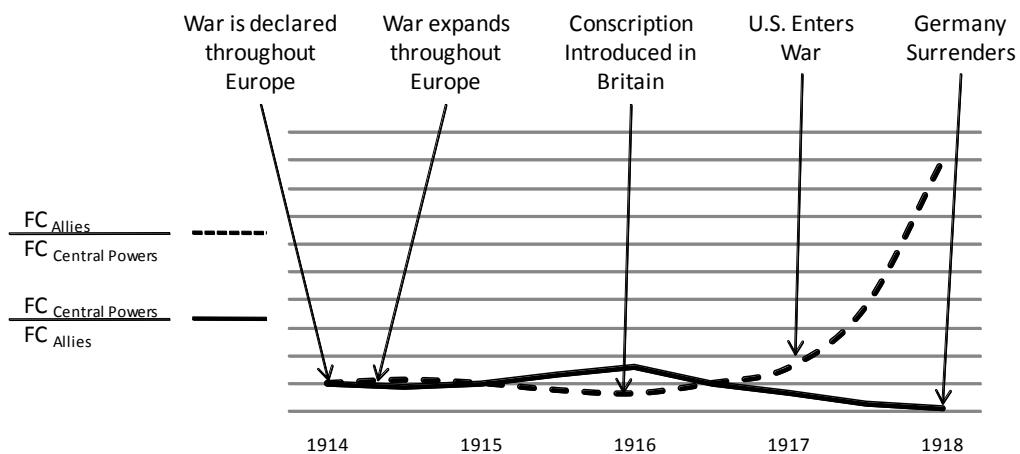


Figure 3: World War I

Cuban Missile Crisis – Clausewitz wrote, “Only one consideration can suspend military action, and it seems that it can never be present on more than one side,”... that is, “a desire to wait for a better moment before acting.”²⁴ This was not the case in October 1962 when the world came the closest it had ever been to nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union. On October 16th of that year, the United States detected the deployment of missile launch equipment to Cuba.²⁵ What followed was thirteen days of brinksmanship, diplomacy, and decision making as the United States logically and calmly pursued a graduated non-violent escalation of military and diplomatic deterrent options that eventually resulted in the Soviet Union ordering the return of the missile equipment from Cuba on October 28th.²⁶ Not only was nuclear war at stake but it was feared that a conventional response by the U.S. against Soviet missiles in Cuba would result in a Soviet attack on Turkey.²⁷

Will - In this instance both the United States and the Soviet Union possessed the ‘will’ to escalate up to the point of a nuclear exchange but stopped short of actually executing the attack. The consequences of a nuclear war deterred and negated the will of both parties to escalate the conflict. Resources - It is clearly understood that both the United States and the Soviet Union had the resources to carry out either a nuclear or a conventional war with dire consequences for both parties. Essentially, the estimated cost in national assets (mutually assured destruction) far exceeded what was deemed acceptable by both parties. Actions – The actions by both the United States and the Soviet Union fully demonstrated each other’s resolve. This example clearly depicts the constraining effect ‘will’ has on actions regardless of available resources and is illustrated by Figure 4.

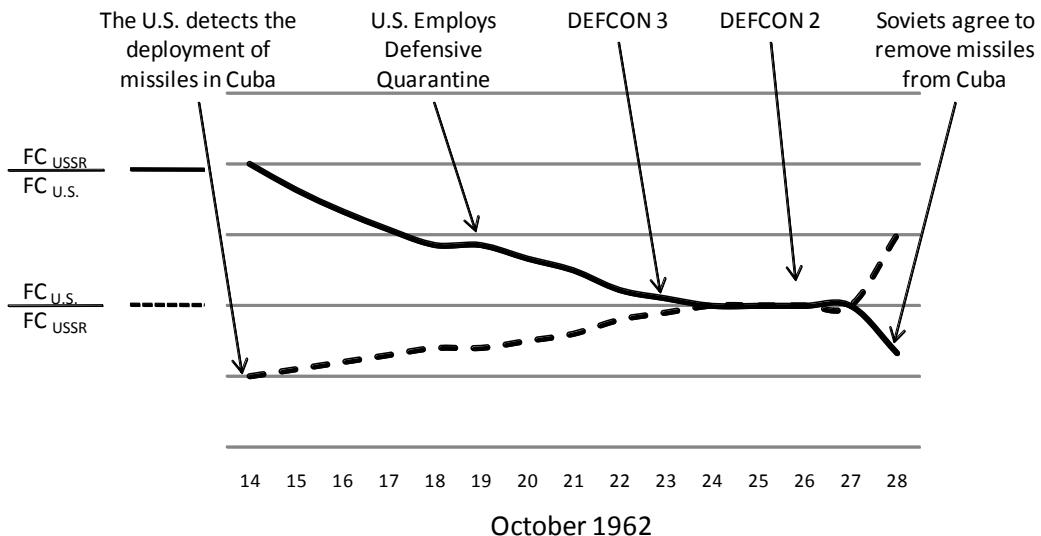


Figure 4: – Cuban Missile Crisis

Non-State Actor versus Non-State Actor. Battle for Homestead - Paul Krause in his centennial book, The Battle for Homestead 1880-1892, relates the events at Homestead Steel Works. "In the infamous battle of 6 July 1892, 300 Pinkerton 'detectives,' dispatched to the mill by darkened river barge under an arrangement with the county sheriff fought virtually the entire town; 3 Pinkertons and 7 workers were killed." ²⁸

Will - This example depicts two organizations that clearly possessed the 'will' to advance to the level of armed conflict. Resources - Carnegie Steel employed Pinkerton detectives to achieve its aim of securing the Homestead mill while the workers armed themselves with personal weapons to repel the Pinkerton attack. Actions – Both sides undertook violent actions to achieve their aim. This example is most closely depicted by Figure 5 with the final resolution determined through the courts where both sides were identified at fault.

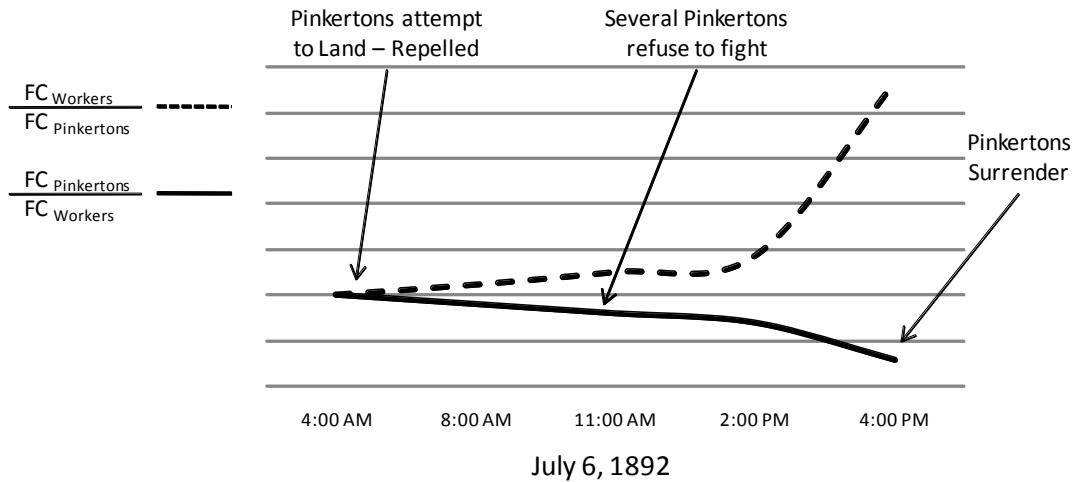


Figure 5: Battle for Homestead

Four Seasons, Caracas – A second example of non-state actors is related in Four Seasons Hotel and Resorts vs. Consorcio Barr. “On February 22, 2002, a group of Consorcio’s personnel, including armed security guards, forcibly entered the Four Seasons’ computer systems room at the Caracas hotel. Under the pretext of self-executing a Venezuelan court order, Consorcio’s personnel downloaded onto back-up tapes all of the guest information and data stored electronically … as well as the financial information and data stored electronically…”²⁹ Using deception and security guards as a paramilitary force, one company used illegal coercive actions to achieve a competitive advantage.

Will – Consorcio Barr exhibited the ‘will’ to resort to violence to coerce and deceive its opposition while Four Seasons Hotel and Resorts had the ‘will’ to pursue resolution within the judicial system. Resources – Consorcio Barr employed armed security guards and deception while Four Seasons ultimately used the United States court system to seek restitution.³⁰ Actions – While Consorcio Barr resorted to illegal coercive actions Four Seasons pursued constructive resolution and secured restitution

in the courts that resulted in punitive judgment against Consorcio Barr. This example is depicted in Figure 6 where Consorcio initially has both the 'will' and the resources to achieve its aim but Four Seasons achieves victory over time by marshalling both the 'will' and legal support to regain a competitive advantage.

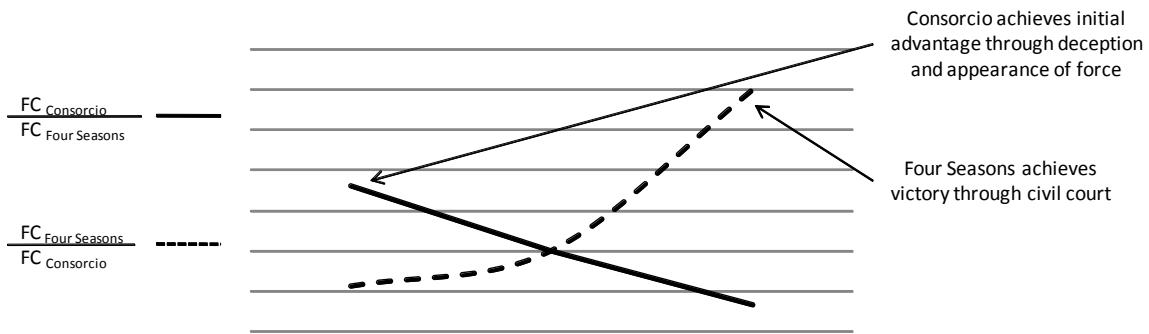


Figure 6: Consorcio vs. Four Seasons

Nation State versus Non-State Actor. It is instructive to examine a benign non-state actor that has never engaged in overt conflict before exploring one that has. The mission statement of the Texas Nationalist Movement is, "The Texas Nationalist Movement exists to secure and protect the political, cultural and economic independence of the nation of Texas and to restore and protect a constitutional Republic and the inherent rights of the people of Texas."³¹ The Texas Nationalist Movement is not a state but rather an organization of individuals who share common beliefs and a goal of Texas independence. Similar minded groups have attempted by force to meet comparable aims.

Will – The Texas Nationalist Movement has clearly stated that its aim is to secure independence for the "Nation of Texas." Resources – Currently the movement has a fully developed web-site, with links to numerous social networking sites, where it wages an information campaign marshalling the will of potential members and soliciting

resources. The webpage offers the opportunity to contribute money and / or join the organization but does not indicate its membership number or its financial worth. Its opponent, the United States, has over 307 Million people and a Gross Domestic Product of over 14.4 Trillion Dollars.³² Actions - This example is most closely represented by Figure 7 without regard to time as the United States has the clear advantage over the Texas Nationalist Movement with regard to 'will' and resources. In this instance the United States has the clear advantage and must maintain that advantage by monitoring the resources of this organization in order to predict and prevent any escalation to illegal or coercive activities.

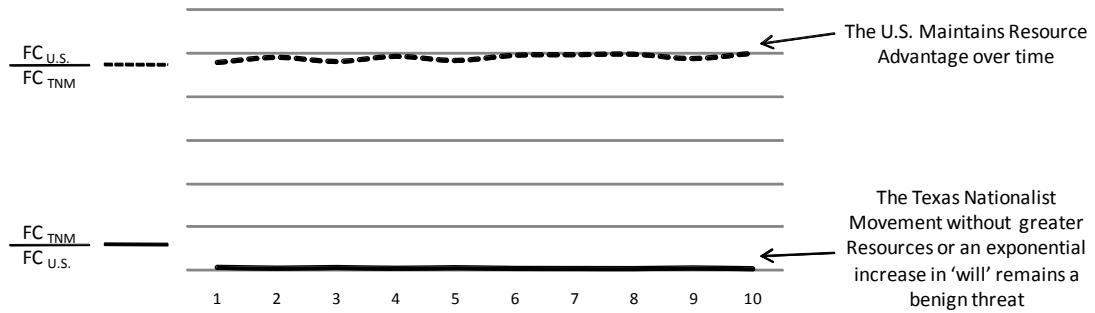


Figure 7: Texas Nationalist Movement

Al-Qaeda's War on the United States - During the 1990's Al-Qaeda waged war on the United States of America beginning with the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on February 26, 1996.³³ The response by the United States to this attack on American soil was to label the attack a criminal act thus "obscuring the need to examine the character and extent of the new threat facing the United States."³⁴ In February 1998 Osama Bin Laden issued a public Fatwa that claimed, "that America had declared war against God and his messenger, they called for the murder of any American, anywhere on earth, as the 'individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in

any country in which it is possible to do it.”³⁵ This was followed on August 7, 1998 with an attack on the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.³⁶ On August 20, 1998 the United States responded with cruise missile strikes on training bases in Afghanistan.³⁷ Additionally the United States sought to pursue diplomatic solutions with both the Sudanese and the Taliban, who were suspected of aiding Al-Qaeda. Neither the Sudanese or the Taliban would support the United States which resulted in an American warning to them that, “they would be held directly accountable for any attacks on Americans, wherever they occurred, carried out by the Bin Ladin network as long as they continued to provide sanctuary to it.”³⁸ Al-Qaeda again struck the United States on October 22, 2000 when it attacked the USS Cole in Yemen.³⁹ The American response was to again to treat the attack as a criminal event. Bin Ladin, preparing for a military response, ordered the evacuation of a compound in Afghanistan and later complained that the United States did not bother to attack it.⁴⁰

Will - An attack on American soil, an attack on two American embassies, and an attack on an American warship all constitute acts of war. Clearly Al-Qaeda had declared war on the United States by both word and action. The United States, however, chose to interpret these attacks as a violation of law and not acts of war. By so doing, the US avoided the difficult decision to treat the countries supporting the terrorists as war combatant themselves. The US lacked the ‘will’ to face the obvious repercussions across the Arab community and the world should it strike directly at the governments supporting these terrorists. It was not until after the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks on September 11, 2001 that the United States displayed the ‘will’ to accept the consequences of war with the terrorists and those countries providing support to

terrorists. Correspondingly, President George W. Bush declared a “War on Terror” on September 20th. Resources – Al-Qaeda’s resources are unknown; some sources gauge their membership in the thousands,⁴¹ its financial support has appeared to wane over the years but it makes continued use of the internet for information and coordination. The United States, as outlined previously, has over 307 Million people and a Gross Domestic Product of over 14.4 Trillion Dollars⁴² and has expended over 1 trillion dollars in funds conducting operations against known terrorists and suspected supporting terrorist states. The US has suffered over 6000 military casualties conducting the war on terrorism. Actions - This example is depicted in Figure 8. The United States has the clear advantage over Al-Qaeda in terms of resources but its ability to maintain its ‘will’ in order to marshal its Resources against Al-Qaeda remains in question. Clearly if the United States loses its ‘will’ to continue to expend its manpower and national treasure conducting the war on terrorism to defeat Al-Qaeda while Al-Qaeda maintains its ‘will’ and pursues long-term asymmetric means of attack, then the United States is at risk of losing the war and seeding major portions of ungoverned areas of the world over to Al-Qaeda.

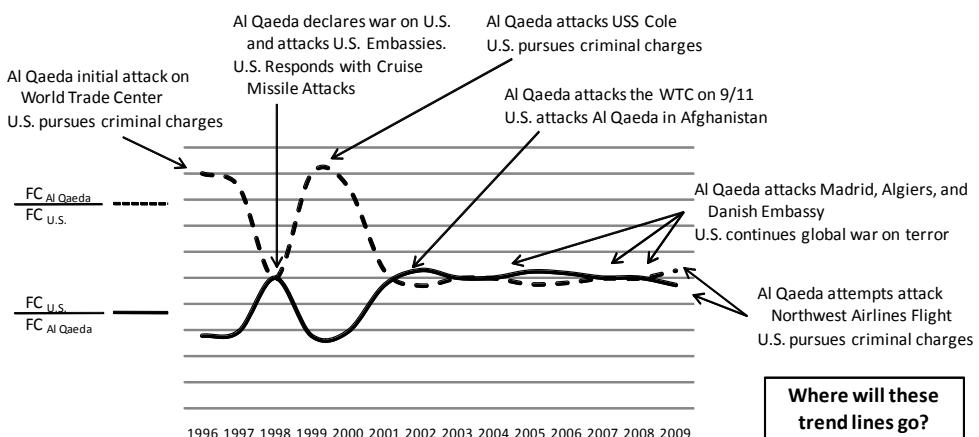


Figure 8: – U.S. vs. Al-Qaeda

Conclusion

Now more than ever, with the fate of the War on Terrorism hanging in the balance, we must accept an expanded definition of conflict. That is: *conflict consists of the dialectic of opposing entities using marshaled resources employed as capabilities fueled by the will of their respective leaders and followers in order to achieve competing ends.* The strength of this definition and its associated implications is that it provides a means by which the strategic and operational environment can be monitored to detect incidents between the seam of *competition* and *coercive competition* and between *coercive competition* and *war*. When incidents within these seams occur, leadership must research the cause and determine if it symptomatic of an endemic condition that may portend future incidents. If so, a deliberate strategy must be formulated and executed to alleviate the condition and/or deter further incidents. In retrospect, huge gains in social-economic progress could have been alternatively achieved with the investment of the billions of dollars in funds and thousands of lost lives fighting what has emerged as terrorist threats to our national security. Notwithstanding, although many nations have been attacked by Al-Qaeda,⁴³ the United States, as the remaining superpower, must maintain its resolve and fully marshal its resources to defeat this dangerous threat. On first blush this seems obvious, but the United States' incongruent actions represent a weakness of its 'will' to our friends, allies, and to our enemies.

On December 10, 2009, President Barrack Obama stated,

"For make no mistake: Evil does exist in the world. A non-violent movement could not have halted Hitler's armies. Negotiations cannot convince Al-Qaeda's leaders to lay down their arms. To say that force may sometimes be necessary is not a call to cynicism -- it is recognition of history; the imperfections of man and the limits of reason."⁴⁴

However, on November 13, 2009 the Attorney General of the United States, Robert Holder, announced, "that the Department of Justice will pursue prosecution in federal court of the five individuals accused of conspiring to commit the 9/11 attacks."⁴⁵ These statements appear incongruent with one another as the Attorney General's decision potentially sends the wrong message to Al-Qaeda and its potential recruits that the United States does not recognize that a state of war exists.

Incongruent responses to continued attacks on America do not, in and of themselves, represent that America lacks the 'will' to defend itself nor that its leaders lack the resolve to continue to fight a war against terrorists and their supporters. It may illustrate that we do not understand the contemporary nature of conflict and that we are unwittingly tied to the associated legacy theories; theories that have heretofore stood the test of time but now fail to lend themselves to coping with the current operational and strategic environment.

Endnotes

¹ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, eds. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 75.

² Fortune Global 500, CNN Money webpage, <http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/global500/2009/> (accessed February 20, 2010)

Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html> (accessed February 20, 2010). In 2009 Wal-Mart was rated the third largest company in the world in the Fortune Global 500 with revenues exceeding \$405 Billion dollars which exceed Australia's revenues indicated in the CIA World Factbook as \$322 Billion. First and second on the list were Royal Dutch Shell and Exxon Mobil with revenues of \$458 Billion and \$442 Billion Respectively which place them behind Canada at \$514 Billion.

³ Clausewitz, *On War*, 75.

⁴ Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, Trans, Peter L. Simpson (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 1997), 75.

⁵ Clausewitz, *On War*, 75.

⁶ Sun-tzu, *The Art of War*, Trans. Ralph D. Sawyer (New York, NY: Fall River Press, 1994), 167.

⁷ Ibid., 303.

⁸ Warren Buffet, 2001 Shareholder Letter, <http://www.berkshirehathaway.com/letters/letters.html> (accessed September 13, 2009).

⁹ The 'Oracle of Omaha' as well as the 'Sage of Omaha' are common terms of reference ascribed to Warren Buffet, the Chief Executive Officer of Berkshire Hathaway headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska. Both reference his unique prognostication abilities to find and acquire undervalued high potential companies.

¹⁰ Kate Pickert, A Brief History of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, Time Magazine webpage, <http://www.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,1822766,00.html> (accessed February 20, 2010). Although the current economic crisis is based on a multitude of factors, the housing market has become a central figure either from derivative mortgage-based securities at the one extreme or high risk mortgages at the other. Kate Pickert provided an ample explanation of the government's involvement in her July 14, 2008 Time Magazine article, A Brief History of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. She states, "Today, the two companies dominate the mortgage market, partly because of the belief that loans backed by Freddie and Fannie carry an implicit government guarantee: the companies are so large that the government would never allow them to fail." A stark warning two months before the government's \$700 Billion dollar bailout of the housing industry.

¹¹ Clausewitz, *On War*, 77.

¹² Ibid., 77.

¹³ Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 12 April 2001; As Amended Through 19 August 2009), 334.

¹⁴ Ibid., 76.

¹⁵ Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Trans. Richard Crawley, Rev. Donald Lateiner (New York, NY: Barnes and Noble Books, 2006), 51.

¹⁶ Clausewitz, *On War*, 78.

¹⁷ Confucius, *Analects*, Trans. Edward Slingerland (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2003), 217.

¹⁸ In this example: Personnel are measured in terms of 10 Million, therefore 20 = 200,000,000. Funding is measured in terms of a Trillion Dollars, therefore 14 = \$14 Trillion. Material is also measured in terms of a Trillion Dollars, therefore 1 = \$1 Trillion.

¹⁹ Barbara Wertheim Tuchman, *The Guns of August* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 18.

²⁰ Ibid., 33.

²¹ Tom Pendergast and Sara Pendergast, *World War I: Almanac* (Detroit, U-X-L, 2002), 199.

²² Ibid., 201.

²³ Clausewitz, *On War*, 80.

²⁴ Ibid., 82.

²⁵ Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the brink of nuclear war*, 1st Ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 3.

²⁶ Ibid., 333.

²⁷ Ibid., 312.

²⁸ Paul Krause, *The Battle for Homestead, 1890-1892: Politics, Culture, and Steel*, (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992).

²⁹ Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts v. Consorcio Barr, 267 F. Supp. 2d 1268, 1271-72 (S.D. Fla.).

³⁰ Note that while the actions would be criminal actions in the United States, they did not meet the threshold of prosecution in Venezuela, leaving Four Seasons recourse in civil rather than criminal court.

³¹ Texas Nationalist Homepage, <http://www.texasnationalist.com> (accessed September 13, 2009).

³² Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html> (accessed January 24, 2010).

³³ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission report: final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (Washington, DC: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004), 71.

³⁴ Ibid., 72.

³⁵ Ibid., 47.

³⁶ Ibid., 69.

³⁷ Ibid., 117.

³⁸ Ibid., 121.

³⁹ Ibid., 190.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 191.

⁴¹ Craig Calhoun, *Understanding September 11* (New York, The New Your Press, 2002), 150.

⁴² Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html> (accessed January 24, 2010).

⁴³ Mohammad-Mahmoud Mohamedou, *Understanding Al Qaeda* (London, Pluto Press, 2007), 86.

⁴⁴ Barrack Obama, "The White House Webpage" <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-acceptance-nobel-peace-prize> (accessed December 12, 2009).

⁴⁵ Eric Holder, "United States Department of Justice Webpage" <http://www.justice.gov/ag/speeches/2009/ag-speech-091113.html> (accessed December 12, 2009).